

# HURRICANE KATRINA UPDATE 6

Date: 10 September 2005

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY Disaster Recovery Update – Key Messages 10 September 2005

### **DHS DISASTER RECOVERY UPDATE – KEY MESSAGES – 10 Sep**

***Reduce Further Fatalities and Save Lives.*** Federal, state and local responders will continue life saving and life sustaining missions by providing ongoing search and rescue, water, food, and medicine, while also taking appropriate actions to prevent exposure, crime and disease. It is important for all residents in New Orleans to evacuate the affected area. All persons found by search and rescue teams will be evacuated as they are found. Unfortunately, there is still much we do not know about the true toll this storm has had on the region, especially on the loss of life. Whatever that number is, it will be devastating to all of us, and our hearts go out to our fellow Americans who have lost loved ones in this terrible tragedy.

***Provide Safe Shelter and Secure Housing Facilities.*** FEMA and the American Red Cross are working with federal and state partners and voluntary organizations to ensure victims of Hurricane Katrina are relocated to safe shelters with life-sustaining commodities. Long-term housing is a high priority to relieve the impact of sheltering in all states. A Housing Area Command was previously established in Baton Rouge. Additional housing task forces are also working to identify long-term housing facilities in order to assist disaster victims as quickly as possible.

***FEMA Activates Expedited Assistance Program.*** In the interest of helping people get on the road to recovery, FEMA is activating their expedited assistance program to offer immediate aid (\$2,000 per household) to those who have been displaced from their homes as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Affected individuals in declared counties can register online for disaster assistance at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) or call 1-800-621-FEMA. Expedited assistance in the form of FEMA-issued debit cards is targeted to the large evacuee population currently housed in Dallas, Houston and San Antonio. Applicants from Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi will receive assistance mailed to shelters, through an electronic funds transfer, or the debit card program in an ongoing effort to meet their immediate needs.

### **KEY STATISTICS**

- ✓ More than **84,000** response, rescue, recovery and law enforcement personnel are working around the clock to bring critical aid and support to the Gulf Coast region.
- ✓ More than **208,000** evacuees are safely housed in shelters in **17** states and the District of Columbia
- ✓ **553,575** registrations for individual assistance (telephone and online) have been taken for Ala., La., and Miss.
- ✓ **18,068** housing damage inspections have been completed.
- ✓ More than **49,700** lives have been saved or rescued to date.

- ✓ More than **49** million liters of water and over **21** million MREs distributed by FEMA.
- ✓ Disaster Recovery Centers are open in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.
- ✓ **61** National Disaster Medical System Teams are engaged in Gulf Region.

## **TODAY'S EVENTS**

3:00 pm EDT FEMA holds afternoon media briefing.

## **WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING**

“Vice Adm. Thad W. Allen, who has been put in charge of the federal response to Hurricane Katrina, is known as a steady Coast Guard commander already tested by major crises, including some that drew intense public scrutiny. After the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, he commanded the Coast Guard response up and down the Atlantic Seaboard, moving ships and personnel to patrol the waters and secure the ports ... “What he brings to the new position is an attribute you're going to see more and more out of the Coast Guard, an ability to operate at the interagency level,” said Rear Adm. Joseph L. Nimmich, director of the Coast Guard Maritime Domain Awareness Program, which tracks commercial and recreational vessels. “He will focus on that unity of effort from all the players,” said Admiral Nimmich, who has worked with Admiral Allen for 18 years. “He is a communicator. You're going to see him out speaking with all the local communities in the area of this natural disaster.” (Commander Accustomed to Scrutiny and Crises, [\*New York Times\*](#), September 10, 2005)

“The Coast Guard vice admiral selected Friday to lead the government's response to the havoc created by Hurricane Katrina is known as a decisive manager who makes the most of limited resources. Serving in New England in the early 1990s, then-Capt. Thad W. Allen was nicknamed “the Schwarzkopf of Connecticut” by members of his staff who saw similarities between the way he handled an oil spill in sensitive Long Island Sound and Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, who led U.S. forces in the 1991 Persian Gulf War. “He doesn't let red tape and bureaucracy get in his way — he figures out a way to do things,” said Master Chief Petty Officer Skip Bowen, who has served with Allen three times in the last 15 years, and is stationed in the Florida Keys.” (Relief Official Comes With Vote of Confidence, [\*Los Angeles Times\*](#), September 10, 2005)

“The economically crucial port in New Orleans aims to reopen for commercial business Wednesday and to recover completely in six months — a quicker-than-expected comeback from Hurricane Katrina but still not fast enough to prevent additional financial hardship among American farmers. The Port of New Orleans this week began unloading federal ships bearing relief supplies, and port President Gary LaGrange said the port could be operating at 25% of its capacity in a month, at 75% in three months and at full steam in six months. “It's been just inch by inch, but every day, you can see a little more progress,” he said, citing a just-cleared trucking route to the docks and a longshore workers union's promise of an adequate labor supply by next week. (“A Swift Return Planned for Port, [\*Los Angeles Times\*](#), September 10, 2005)

“... Entergy faces the task of restoring power to 1.1 million of its 2.7 million customers, four times the largest disruption it has ever encountered. The blackouts affect numerous vital refineries and energy pipelines. ...It's the culture of people who have been in the business for a long time ...Crews don't want to be sent home. They want to be sent to New Orleans. ... [Question:] You've spent a lot of time talking to government officials at all levels about the recovery process. What's your assessment of how well the various levels of government have understood and reacted to Katrina's impact on the power industry? [Answer:] They have been far more understanding of what we're up against than I've ever seen before. Nobody has said no to anything we've asked for. The Department of Commerce called me this morning before I even got out of bed to go over our list of long-term needs. When we've said we won't go there without protection, they've delivered it. Everybody understands now that power is an absolute necessity.” (“Restoring the Light at the End of the Tunnel,” [\*The New York Times\*](#), September 10, 2005)